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NOTES.

I. MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT.

Chicago.—*The Election* held in Chicago April 1 resulted in the election of what should prove to be not only the most honest, but also the most efficient council Chicago has had in many years, in the consolidation of the town governments within the limits of the city, and in an overwhelming majority for municipal ownership of street railways and gas and electric plants and in favor of direct primaries.

The total vote cast in the aldermanic contests was only about fifty-nine per cent of that cast at the last presidential election. A few years ago this would have resulted in the election of the worst candidates. But the condition in Chicago has changed very decidedly for the better and out of a total of thirty-six aldermen elected, twenty-eight were recommended by the Municipal Voters' League. Only eight candidates denounced by the League as being unfit for public office, were elected. Most of these have been members of the council in the past and are returned with reduced majorities. In two cases the majorities are so small that the seats will be contested. A few notorious gangsters in the old council and a number of would-be notorious gangsters in the next were defeated. A few of the valuable aldermen in the old council will not have seats in the new, but several new members with wide experience, some of them members of former councils, more than make good the loss.

Out of a total of seventy members the new council will have fifty-three endorsed by the Municipal Voters' League. Most of these, and a few of the seventeen not endorsed, have subscribed to the League's platform which, among other things, declares for non-partisan organization of the council; for a strict and businesslike system of accounting and auditing and the limiting of expenditures to actual public necessities and keeping them within the revenue; for adequate compensation to the city for all franchise privileges, *i. e.*, whatever is earned by public service corporations over and above a fair return on "value of the tangible property" actually employed in conducting their enterprises; for limiting franchises to "as short a term as practicable," in no case to exceed twenty years; for the explicit reservation of the "opportunity for municipal ownership" at or before the expiration of any franchise for street railways, gas or electric plants or other public utilities; for uniformity and publicity of the accounts of all corporations holding public franchises; and for the application of the

¹ Contributed by H. A. Millis, Ph. D., Crerar Library, Chicago.

merit system to the civil service and the strict enforcement of the civil service laws. That this platform expresses fairly well the public will is shown by the almost unanimous endorsement by the press and the election of the great majority of the candidates recommended by the League.

The *consolidation of the seven town governments* lying wholly within the limits of Chicago is the first step in the simplification and unification of its municipal government. The returns showed 64,721 for and 10,506 against the proposition, about 65 per cent of those voting having failed to vote at all on the question. This neglect was probably due to the conviction that there would be a large majority in favor of consolidation.

Originally the county was the unit of local government in Illinois, but since it was made possible by the General Assembly, in 1879, all but eighteen of the one hundred and two counties, Cook among them, have adopted the town system. Within the limits of Chicago the town governments have been charged with no important duties save the assessment of property for purposes of taxation and the collection of taxes. The assessor made the original assessments. These were revised by the assessor, supervisor and clerk, serving as a board of appeal, and again revised by the board of county commissioners, acting as a board of review, and as a board of equalization among the several towns. This resulted in perhaps the worst and most corrupt administration of the general property tax ever met with in this country. Finally, in 1898, the assessment of property in Cook County, for purposes of taxation, was placed in the hands of a board of assessors and a board of review. Since that time the town assessors have served as deputies in the employ of the board of assessors. The taxes have continued to be collected by the town collectors.

For years the town offices in Chicago have been used for profit and political advancement by unscrupulous politicians. Except when occasionally enjoined from so doing by the courts, the town officers have voted themselves large salaries in defiance of the law. Town collectors have illegally withheld from the public coffers the taxes collected, that they might secure to themselves the interest derived from them. At all times the town revenues have been unduly swelled to serve ostensibly as salaries for public work performed, but in reality as rewards for those who had made themselves politically useful. It is estimated that consolidation will result in a saving to the taxpayers of half a million per year.

The final consolidation of the town governments has been secured only after a number of unsuccessful attempts. It is made now in accordance with an act passed by the last General Assembly (1901),

applying to townships lying wholly within cities of more than 50,000 population—at present Chicago and Peoria. By the terms of this act, when accepted by the electorate, all powers vested in such townships are exercised by the city council; the city clerk becomes ex-officio clerk and assessor of each township, the county treasurer ex-officio collector and supervisor, and the offices of highway commissioners are abolished. Just what is the status of the constables under the new law is not clear.

Municipal Ownership. The vote taken on the municipal ownership of street railways and lighting plants and on direct primaries was made possible by an act passed by the last General Assembly, providing that "on a written petition signed by twenty-five per cent of the registered voters of any incorporated town, village, city, township, county or school district; or ten per cent of the registered votes (voters) of the state, it shall be the duty of the proper election officers in each case to submit any question of public policy so petitioned for to the electors . . . at any general or special election named in the petition," not more than three such propositions being submitted at the same election. The three propositions in this case were petitioned for together and were submitted to the voters on a separate ballot.

The results of the vote on these questions of public policy are on the surface somewhat surprising. Contrary to the fears of many the vote polled was comparatively large. Of the 213,859 voting in the aldermanic contests, 170,824, 161,365 and 157,740 expressed their opinions of municipal ownership of street railways, gas and electric plants and of direct primaries, respectively. About 84 per cent (142,826) of those voting on the question favored municipal ownership of street railways; 139,999, or 87 per cent, favored municipal ownership of gas and electric plants; 140,086, or 89 per cent, favored the system of direct primaries.

Perhaps in voting for the municipal ownership of street railways the 142,826 of a total of almost three times that many registered voters did little more than to record their dissatisfaction with the present situation and their will that the city council when renewing the franchises soon to expire shall serve the interests of the public, reserving adequate powers of control and the right of ownership when it may become possible and expedient. The city now has no authority to own and operate street railways and perhaps will not have such authority in the near future; it would not pay for them out of current income or by incurring a larger debt if it had such authority; the franchises held by the street railway corporations will be of such value for some years that the city must wait for them to expire; and the city's civil service is as yet too inefficient to be charged with such

a trust were the city legally and financially able to gain control of them. Under the circumstances the proposition for "ownership by the city of Chicago of all street railroads within the corporate limits of said city" appealed favorably to several classes of voters. No one was able to give accurate expression to his wishes. The proposition was approved by those who desire ownership with operation by lessees as well as by those who favor ownership with operation by public employees. There are among those voting in the affirmative some enthusiasts who want municipal ownership at once or in the very near future; there are many who regard it as a solution to be applied at some indefinite time in the future; while finally there are those who wish the city to be in position to acquire the street railway properties as a last resort when the policy of regulation shall have been definitely proved to be unsatisfactory. All agree in serving notice on the General Assembly, the city council and the street railway corporations that the inadequate transportation service, the inefficient management, the corruption and disregard for public interests obtaining in the past must not recur in the future.

In voting favorably on the proposition for municipal ownership of gas and electric plants, expression was given to the same feeling of dissatisfaction created by "gas trust" methods. The "gas trust" has defied the anti-trust laws, corrupted the General Assembly and city council, and fought, thus far, successfully, all attempts to reduce the price of its product to the consumer. It and the Edison company have paid large dividends in watered stock. The people have rebelled. The experiment of municipal street lighting has been very successful. The city now owns more than 4,000 of the electric lights used for street lighting. The voters wish to have the system extended so as to light all the streets, and to furnish both electricity and gas to private consumers at reasonable prices. Their decision that relief must be had from the oppression of two monopolies, and practically no agitation, was necessary to secure the large majority for municipal ownership noted above.

Political Bossism. Another thing from which the people desire relief is the political boss. The primary elections are now under the protection of the law. During the few years the present system has been in force the situation has been somewhat improved. But the final solution has not been found. A change was proposed and looked upon with favor. There was little agitation of the matter, and no direct comparison of the merits of direct primaries with those of nomination for local office by petition, which would ignore political parties altogether. One hundred and forty thousand and eighty-six men have expressed their opinions of the methods adopted by

the "machine" to elect the "right" delegates at the primaries, and to control them in the nominating convention. Seventeen thousand six hundred and fifty-four find that the present system serves them well, or object to the system of direct primaries because they nominate by petition.

*Bureau of Statistics and Municipal Library.*¹ Five years ago Boston created a department of statistics. Beginning with May, 1899, it has published a monthly and issued a number of special bulletins. New York created a similar department, but it has not been continued under the new charter of 1901. The third city in this country to undertake such work was the city of Chicago.

The Bureau of Statistics, created a year ago, was an outgrowth of the Municipal Library, established some months earlier, to make a systematic collection of and to care for the official documents of other cities. Since March, 1901, the Librarian and Statistician has issued a bimonthly bulletin. Number VI, published in January of this year, completes Volume I.

The primary purpose of the city of Chicago statistics is to show in concise form the workings of the several departments of the city government. In addition to this, however, it gives the statistics of clearings, commerce, imports and exports, and shipping of Chicago, and publishes in appendices the results of comparative studies in municipal finance and administration.

Unfortunately the administration of the three park systems and the charitable institutions is vested in park boards and the Board of County Commissioners, and is not covered by these bulletins. The statistics relating to those branches of municipal administration falling within the jurisdiction of the city are very full and are intelligently compiled. They are taken from the official records, and are so arranged as to show concisely and accurately the things of interest to the public. A monthly record of receipts and of expenditures by departments has not been made. Perhaps this will be done when adequate appropriations are made for carrying on the work.

The appendices are by no means the least important part of the publication. Those published in Volume I are "Municipal Statistics of the City of Chicago from 1893 to 1900," a "Comparative Statement of the Revenues and Expenditures of Twenty American Cities for the Year 1900," "Comparative Police Statistics of Twenty American Cities for the Year 1900," "Statistics Showing the Growth of the Waterworks System of the City of Chicago from 1854 until 1900," "Tax Collections in Chicago Since 1881," "Receipts of Chicago, Showing Actual Cash Income from 1881-1900," "Comparative

¹ Contributed by H. A. Millis, Ph. D., Crerar Library, Chicago.

Statement of License Fees Charged and Amounts Collected in New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, St. Louis and Boston for 1900," "Number of Police Officers and Salaries Paid in Ten American Cities for the Year 1901," "Annual Report of the Municipal Library and Bureau of Statistics," and a "Summary of the Municipal Government of the City of Chicago for the Year 1901."

All of the statistical tables bear evidence of thorough investigation and careful compilation. When compared with those published by Boston and several foreign cities the bulletins are found to be among the best. Every student of municipal administration will find them valuable for reference, and every library collecting literature relating to municipal affairs should have them on its shelves.

Philadelphia.—*The Municipal League*, in its tenth annual report, advance proof-sheets of which have been given the ANNALS, reviews the work of the past year and indicates the progress during ten years of the principles for which the League stands. Established to create and organize public opinion, it feels that it has succeeded in the first to an unexpected degree. The public seems to have accepted the League's position that no public franchises should be granted, except for a limited term of years, and upon condition that the city should be adequately compensated for the privilege.

The Stay-at-Home Vote. Thus far, however, this acceptance has been theoretical, but not practical. Men have failed to vote as they think, or, worse still, they have failed to vote at all. The machine can always depend upon its vote, partly through the perfection of its organization; partly through its almost absolute control of the election officers. But its great source of strength—we might almost say its bulwark—is the indifference and apathy of the independent voter. The returns show that there are at least 90,000 such in Philadelphia; they also show that they come out only on occasions, instead of regularly. Of nearly 350,000 assessed voters in November, but 239,900 voted; that is but 68 per cent of the whole. Nearly the entire assessment was voted in the notoriously corrupt wards, so that the percentage of stay-at-homes in the independent wards must have been greatly in excess of 32 per cent. This figure is criminally large in a democratic community.

Personal Registration. After six years of unremitting endeavor the state constitution has been so amended that personal registration may be required by statute. The Governor attempted to prevent this amendment going to the people, but the Supreme Court unanimously denied the right of an executive to veto a proposed amendment to the constitution. Another battle must be fought to secure the passage of a bill to require personal registration.

Franchise Legislation. The proposition of the late A. L. Johnson to guarantee three-cent fares for a street railway franchise opened the eyes of the existing company and of the machine to the valuable privileges still within the gift of the city. Then followed a series of moves unprecedented in the history of the United States. Two enabling bills were rushed through the state senate with no public hearing and no debate. Reported to the House through a trick, they were pushed through that body with equal speed, and sent to the Governor, who signed them at midnight without a public hearing, but in the presence of the leaders of the machine and of the subsequent beneficiaries of the legislation. Thirteen ordinances under the new acts were introduced into councils and, with but a farce of a public hearing, were passed by both chambers. At the hearing referred to the president of the League was graciously permitted to read the League's protest and then the committee proceeded with automaton-like dispatch to dispose of the ordinances.

The mayor gave no public hearing, but signed the bills on the same day they were presented to him and in face of an offer of \$2,500,000 for the franchises from a responsible citizen who backed up his offer by a deposit of \$250,000. In a few days over two weeks, franchises estimated by the grantees to be worth not less than \$10,000,000, were granted without a cent's worth of compensation to the city or a single line of protection.

Tax Revision. The last legislature devised a bill ousting from office the existing Philadelphia Board of Revision of Taxes, which for thirty years had worked to the general satisfaction of the citizens, and providing for a new board to be elected at the general election. The bill was passed and approved by the Governor, but it had to run the gantlet of the Supreme Court of the State, which declared it and its companion bill unconstitutional.

Buffalo.¹—In December last Buffalo entered upon a brief season of municipal house-cleaning. A large defalcation was discovered in the city treasurer's funds, and an investigation showed that he had been in the habit of paying city funds to persons who had money due them from the city in advance of the issuance of warrants therefor. As this is in direct violation of the city charter, the mayor removed him from office. He was subsequently indicted by the grand jury and is now awaiting trial. One of his subordinates, who was concerned in the matter, was also indicted, pleaded guilty, and has been sentenced to a term in prison. Next an official in the county clerk's office was found guilty of falsifying lists of jurors in such a way as to convert to his own use pay for men who had not served. He also went to prison.

¹ Contributed by A. C. Richardson, Buffalo.

Then one of the coroners was indicted on a charge of embezzling money found on the body of a laborer who had been killed by an accident. He is now awaiting trial.

Spoils. The Republican ticket was successful in the last election and the new mayor entered upon his office on the first of January. His first official act seemed to indicate that it was his intention to conduct his administration in the interest of the spoils system, pure and simple. The term of the health commissioner, Dr. Ernest Wende, had expired. He was a Democrat, but had held his office for ten years, having been reappointed by one Republican mayor. He had rigidly excluded politics in every shape from the administration of his office, and had conducted it in such a manner as to reduce the death rate to a trifle over eleven per thousand, and to make Buffalo's Health Department famous the world over for fearless efficiency. The great majority of the medical profession protested against the removal of Dr. Wende; hundreds of the best and most prominent citizens signed petitions for his retention, but it availed nothing. The mayor and his party machine saw nothing in the Health Office but a Democrat getting a salary that could be given to a Republican, and accordingly the deputy commissioner, who is a Republican, was appointed to the place—which, one would suppose, is the last in the world that would be likely to be treated as spoils. Now, however, that it is definitely settled that it is to be so treated, it is quite certain that Buffalo can never again have such an administration as that of Dr. Wende, for no first-class physician can ever be induced to take the place under such circumstances.

Civil Service Commission. There has long been much dissatisfaction with the manner in which the civil service law was administered by the commission appointed by the last mayor. Rumors of irregularities, favoritism, etc., were frequent, and it seemed best to the new mayor to appoint an entirely new one, and to reduce the number from fifteen to seven. Three of the new members were suggested by the Civil Service Reform Association, and had served upon a former commission. As soon as the new commission was announced, definite complaints were made to its chairman in regard to a recent examination for police patrolmen. He made a careful investigation, and discovered sufficient evidence, not only of favoritism but of downright fraud, to justify the commission in annulling the examination, canceling the eligible list made from it, and holding a new examination, which, at the time of writing, it seems likely that they will do.

State Legislation. The Park Commission has been reduced by law from fifteen to five, and the assessors from five to three; these changes are generally regarded as good. But another measure now

awaits the governor's signature (and will probably receive it), which is universally considered as wholly bad. It creates a bi-partisan Board of Elections for Erie County, consisting of two election commissioners with a force of clerks, etc., who are to do the work of preparing for elections. This work has been done to everybody's satisfaction for a dozen years by the city, county and town clerks of the county. The proposed board is wholly unnecessary, and no one can see anything in it but a scheme to provide big salaries for two or three party workers.

Commissioner vice Board of Public Works.—Our Board of Public Works, consisting formerly of three commissioners, was replaced at the beginning of the year by a single elected commissioner. Whether this will prove to be a wise change or not depends largely upon the character of the commissioner. The principle is undoubtedly good.

New Orleans.—*Water Franchise Forfeited.*¹ The most important fact of recent date, affecting the inhabitants of New Orleans, is the decision of the Supreme Court of Louisiana, rendered November 7, 1901, rehearing refused February 3, 1902, forfeiting the charter and franchises of the New Orleans Waterworks Company, which had a legislative monopoly of the public and private water supply and which had twenty-seven years yet to run. The ground of the forfeiture was an abuse of its franchises and failure to perform the conditions on which the franchise was granted: (1) In not furnishing an adequate supply of pure and wholesome water; (2) in unjust discrimination in charges; (3) in charging and exacting more than the charter allowed. A writ of error has been allowed by Mr. Justice Peckham to the Supreme Court of United States, where it is now pending on a motion to dismiss or affirm.

The hands of the Sewerage and Water Board have been tied by this monopoly. It was created in 1899, charged with the duty of giving New Orleans an adequate supply of pure water and sewerage, and has \$14,000,000 to expend. It has awaited the result of the suit to forfeit the monopoly of the Waterworks Company.

The legislature meets in May and renewed effort will be made to subject franchises and corporate wealth to a just share of taxation.

Port Commission. The administration of the fourteen miles of wharves in the Port of New Orleans has, since June 1, 1901, passed from private lessees into the hands of a public board of Port Commissioners. The port charges have been greatly reduced, about 40 per cent, the purpose being to make New Orleans as nearly a free port as possible—by making the charges just sufficient to main-

¹ Contributed by B. R. Forman, Esq., New Orleans.

tain the wharves. Since 1897, the gross tonnage has increased from 2,926,369 to 4,239,582.

Cabinet Government. The New York *Nation* recently said that some Northern city had just begun the experiment of giving seats in the council to the executive and administrative officers—with a right to speak, but not to vote. I had sat at the feet of Gamaliel Bradford, and from his insistent advocacy in the *Nation* had borrowed the idea, and when I wrote the city charter of New Orleans in 1882, I inserted a section to that effect, and now for twenty years the executive and administrative officers of New Orleans have the legal right to seats in the council and to be heard on any question. I venture to say, that this was the earliest instance in which Mr. Gamaliel Bradford's ideas were incorporated in a public statute and put in practice.

Duluth.¹—*The Board of Water and Light Commissioners* has just rendered its third annual account to the citizens of Duluth. The showing made is a pronounced triumph for municipal ownership. The board figures out a saving to the citizens of Duluth, under public management of the gas and water plants, of \$273,546.78 in a period covering a little over three years, or from August 1, 1898, to January 1, 1902. This saving is directly referable to a reduction in rates and other charges and to economy of management.

To state the proposition in another way: The water rates have been steadily reduced since the plant passed under the control of the city. To quote the words of the report: "The water meter rate was formerly a sliding scale, starting at 5 cents for 100 gallons for a certain quantity. January 1, 1899, this was reduced to 4 cents, which prevailed through the years 1899 and 1900. January 1, 1901, this rate was further reduced to 3½ cents per 100 gallons, equal to two-thirds of the old 5 cent rate." The annual or flat rates remained practically unchanged until 1901, when they too were reduced 33⅓ per cent.

What makes the showing more remarkable, is the fact that the municipality expended, approximately, \$1,000,000 for a supplementary water system, to insure a pure water supply and more efficient distribution, and that the consequent additional interest charge for the period named, aggregating \$165,900, has been fully met out of the revenues of the system, notwithstanding the material reduction of the rates.

The efficiency of the Duluth management is shown by a comparative statement of the cost of pumping water. In Duluth the cost of raising one million gallons one foot high, in 1901, was \$0.0292. In a table presented to the New England Water Works Association at

¹ Contributed by W. G. Joerns, Esq., Duluth, Minn.

their last meeting (see September, 1901, Journal of New England Water Works Association), this record appears as excelled by but two cities, "which were Providence, R. I., in its low service, and New Bedford, Mass. The rate of each of these was \$0.0259." Possibly, on the basis of an equal cost of coal, the result would be still more favorable to Duluth.

The record of the gas plant is equally creditable to the public management. In 1898, when the gas works came under municipal control, the illuminating rate was \$1.90 net and the fuel rate was \$1.00 per thousand feet. The illuminating rate has since then, under municipal management, been reduced to \$1.15 net, the fuel rate remaining unchanged. Under private management the gas plant never paid expenses, including fixed charges. Under municipal operation, not only have all expenses and charges been fully met, but the rate charged has been substantially reduced and the plant is, nevertheless, on a paying basis.

The present management has followed a liberal policy in the development of its patronage. All lamp supplies, gas-stoves, etc., have been furnished to patrons at cost, and competent inspectors have been constantly employed to examine the lights of the consumers, to repair or adjust at once and without charge in the case of lesser defects, to suggest changes and renewals in more important cases.

The result of the management is amply shown in the following table:

| | 1898. | 1899. | 1900. | 1901. |
|-------------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Receipts for gas (cash) . . . | \$30,530 | \$30,979 | \$40,408 | \$45,493 |
| Gas operating expense . . . | | \$21,396 | \$25,412 | \$27,343 |
| Gas meters (number) . . . | 1,111 | 1,510 | 1,725 | 1,995 |
| Gas sold (feet) | 20,002,600 | 25,309,963 | 32,973,800 | 39,472,200 |

New Jersey State Civic Federation.¹—The Civics Club of the Oranges, early in its efforts to remedy certain defects of our municipal and civic affairs, came to realize that certain questions naturally involved the interest of more than one municipality. These questions comprise all problems presented by electric and railway lines, such as referred to comfort in cars, heat, ventilation and sanitation; all matters of sewerage and sewage disposal, in which there was danger of pollution of streams, or in which such pollution was already a deplorable fact; everything pertaining to construction and the maintenance of roads; questions of taxation, especially such as involve the new thought of local option in taxation, and many others proved to acquire action

¹ Contributed by Adolph Roeder, Orange.

rather larger than that within the legitimate scope of a local club, though municipal and civic in nature. Hence the desirability of a State Civic Federation which could hold annual meetings for the exchange of thought and comparison of method in municipal affairs. Acting upon this thought, the president, Dr. Frank Caulkins Bunn, appointed a committee, consisting of Messrs. Adolph Roeder and Charles Maginn, to consider the matter. The committee sent out about 160 calls to postmasters, asking for the names of civic organizations in their respective towns. There were 133 responses. Sixty-six stated that there was no organization, 67 giving the name of an organization or of an official. To these a call was addressed to form such a state federation. A very satisfactory number of replies was received—enough to warrant going on with the work. The number of replies cannot yet be given, because most of the organizations are holding the matter under advisement, in most cases under favorable advisement. The committee felt warranted in calling for an increase in membership from its club, and was therefore increased by the addition of Messrs. John Dodd, Richard K. Mosley and Winthrop Waite. The first meeting of the state organization is being planned for some date in October, probably at the upper end of the state.

Province of Quebec:¹ Minor Municipalities.—*Charters.* The general statutes providing for the organization and government of the lesser municipalities of the Province of Quebec are worthy of careful study. They are not too detailed and inclusive, but allow local needs and conditions to be met by a supplementary charter, which each town must secure as a corporation. The number of councilors is fixed by the charter in each case and not by the general statutes, and there is less uniformity required than in those states where the minor municipalities are divided into classes, each governed by rigid statutes, covering the most minute details.

As in the larger cities of the province, the elective franchise is based upon a property qualification—that is, either the owning of real estate or its possession under lease. What it results in is really an extension of the suffrage to all house-holders and the exclusion of boarders and transients, who are not owners of property. The requirement is ownership of property valued at \$200, or possession of premises of at least \$20 rental value per year. To be qualified for the position of mayor or councilor a higher standard is required—a mayor must own property assessed at \$1,000, a councilor must have \$400. Furthermore, persons in holy orders, members of the Privy Council, officers of the British army and navy on full pay, hotel and tavern-keepers, and those having no fixed domicile are prohibited from occu-

¹ Contributed by Francis H. McLean, Montreal.

pying these offices. All persons qualified to hold office and who, after being duly elected to them, decline to serve, are subject to a fine. All other city officers are appointed by the city council and are removable through them.

Uniform Accounting. In January of each year the secretary-treasurer of a town corporation must submit to the provincial secretary a statement showing: (1) Name of town; (2) Value taxable real estate; (3) Estimated value of real estate not taxed; (4) Number persons paying taxes; (5) Value of the property of the corporation; (6) Amount of taxes collected; (7) All other sums collected by city; (8) Amount of arrears of taxes; (9) Capital amount due to consolidated municipal loan fund; (10) Amount of loans made by debentures; (11) Rate and amount of interest due on loans; (12) Amount of other debts; (13) Amount raised by loan; (14) Expenditure; (15) Number of persons resident in the city. The requirement of these uniform returns affords a good basis for the study of municipal statistics on the fiscal side.

Copies of the general orders of the city council must be sent to all corporations having their chief place of business in the city.

Public Improvements. The city may assist in general public improvements, such as the construction of bridges or of railroads, or the establishment of manufacturing plants, either by remitting taxes for a certain period, or making loans or buying bonds or stocks from private corporations. In cases where the city becomes financially interested, the action of the city council must be approved by a vote of the free-holders.

Among the general powers granted to the city council are: (1) The fixing of the weight of bread; (2) The regulation of markets; (3) The regulation of the conduct of apprentices, servants, hired persons, day laborers or journeymen towards their masters or employers.

*Montreal.*¹—*General Responsibility for Local Improvement.* During the past winter the tax-payers of Montreal have been enabled to see with startling distinctness to exactly what lengths the policy of making the general city treasury responsible for purely local improvements, without joint responsibility of property owners in the district improved, will encourage raids upon that treasury. A short time ago, upon the petition of interested property owners, Notre Dame street, east, was widened and extended. During this process, much of the adjoining property was bought up by speculators. The value of this property was not increased by the improvements so much as was expected. This was partially, but only partially, due to the fact that other improvements carried through at the same time, both by

¹ Contributed by Francis H. McLean, Montreal.

private and public initiative, diverted traffic from Notre Dame street. The cost of the improvement amounted to several millions of dollars. During the session of the Provincial Parliament just ended, a bill was introduced to compel the city treasury to pay the entire cost of the improvement. When it is remembered that by this measure property owners who had already received large sums for the expropriation of land, would be released from any financial responsibility for an improvement which had, to a degree at least, enhanced the value of their remaining real estate, the peculiarly pernicious character of this bill will be better understood.

Outside of a small interested coterie, the sentiment of the city was as a unit against the measure. Aside from the gross injustice of the measure, there was the very practical fact that the city had already reached its debt limit, and that the payment of the costs of the Notre Dame extension would seriously cripple the ordinary and every-day operations of the municipal departments. Despite the efforts of very strong civic deputations, the bill was passed by the legislative assembly. After a hard struggle, however, it was disapproved by the upper chamber, the legislative council, by a vote of 11 to 8. It is hoped that the moral of this attempted legislation will impress itself upon the citizens of Montreal. It is but a natural off-shoot of the very vicious system of not placing sufficient financial responsibility upon local property owners for local improvements, a system peculiar to the Province of Quebec. This has resulted in a general inclination to secure release from just assessments by appealing to the provincial legislature, whenever possible, which provincial legislature is apt to be paternal.